

Capitol Planning Commission Minutes
April 18, 2012
Lucas Building, Rooms 319 and 320 (1:05 p.m. – 3:25 pm)

Members Present:

Cathy Brown, Chair
Elizabeth Isaacson

William Dikis, Vice-Chair
Carl Voss

Mike Carroll

Members Absent:

Allison Kleis
Scott Weiser
Representative Ralph Watts
Senator Pat Ward
Senator Matt McCoy
Representative Dennis Cohoon

Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Staff Present for all or a portion of the meeting:

Steve Gross, DAS/GSE
Caleb Hunter, DAS
Brant Carr, DAS/GSE
Jennifer Moehlmann, DAS/GSE
Charlee Cross, DAS
Nancy Williams, DAS/GSE
Emily Narayan, DAS/GSE

Others Present for all or Portions of the Meeting

Mark Willemsen, Legislature
Elaine Steinger, Jewish Federation
Mark Finkelstein, Jewish Federation
Judy Blank, Myron and Jacqueline Blank Foundation
Matt Carlile, Confluence
Mark Stewart, Dept. of Public Safety
Bill Wedeking, Dept. of Public Safety
Steve Ponsetto, Dept. of Public Safety
Larry Noble, Dept. of Public Safety

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Chair Cathy Brown followed by roll call and introductions.

Meeting Overview and Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Cathy Brown made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Elizabeth Isaacson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2012 Meeting

Jennifer Moehlmann noted the minutes had been corrected to reflect that Carol Grant was with Iowa Sister States, not the Economic Development Authority.

MOTION: Bill Dikis made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Carl Voss seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Site Features Committee Update

Holocaust Memorial:

Guest speakers Mark Finkelstein and Matt Carlile gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Holocaust Memorial Project, reviewing the design and the proposed text and image content. The text and images will be attached to metal walls but are designed to be removed so the wall can be repainted every 10 - 12 years (as needed). They hope to have a dedication ceremony for the Memorial on Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 19, 2013. Mark Finkelstein said they are still finalizing the design, but they hope to include all the text and images in the handout provided. Vice-Chair Bill Dikis requested the Federation pay attention to digital quality when selecting and enlarging photos and broaden the Holocaust Memorial focus to include all groups of people affected and other events. There was concern about the railroad detail presenting a tripping hazard, so Confluence will continue to refine the concept and they will ask for final approval at the July meeting. The Federation/Confluence will submit final information for review prior to the meeting.

MOTION: Carl Voss made a motion to approve the site plan, materials, and the aesthetic concept for images and text content, with final approval of the content and railroad detail at a subsequent meeting. Elizabeth Isaacson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Teacher Boulder:

Work on “Teacher Boulder” has been completed and information on the boulder is posted on the DAS/GSE website in the Complex Monument information section.

Peace Officer Memorial Discussion:

DPS has now raised enough money for constructing the plaza, moving the monument and building the retaining wall this summer. A future phase would be to add 18” high benches made of black granite that would match the obelisk monument and may include donor names. There will also be a stone flat on the ground that describes the memorial move and dedication. The plaza will have rings of black, gray, and white concrete, with the obelisk in the center. The retaining wall will be gray concrete and will be mostly covered by black granite plaques (approximately 36” x 26”) inscribed with the names of peace officers killed in the line of duty. The plaques will be installed blank and engraved in place. There will be drainage below the surface and swales to deal with stormwater. Skateboard preventers have been included. Cathy Brown expressed concern over recognition of donors on the benches (such recognition is prohibited in the guidelines for the site features application – “Site Features on the Capitol Grounds shall: ... 8. Not identify financial contributors to the Site Feature unless authorized by executive order of the governor or joint resolution of the General Assembly...”). Commissioner Noble said the Department of Public Safety will comply with laws and regulations regarding donor recognition.

Wayfinding:

Steve Gross took pictures of building and parking signs around the Capitol Complex as a beginning step in designing the signage standard. Steve Gross said although there are differences in the signs, you know that you’re on Capitol Complex. Carl Voss asked how to handle people looking for a department, not just a building. Steve Gross said that is a challenge and the agency names need to be portable since agencies can move. In the future, all agencies that serve outside visitors may be consolidated at one building, so DAS is hesitant to permanently put agency names on building signs. Steve Gross said DAS is looking at different possibilities and will work closely with Chair Cathy Brown on signage.

Volunteer:

Steve Gross reported that the Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association would like to do a volunteer landscaping project at the Capitol Complex for their service project this fall. Mr. Gross shared the Master Plan guidance on planting and desire for plants that would require minimum maintenance. The

Association will submit landscaping plans to DAS for review this summer and plan to plant in September. Elizabeth Isaacson said the annual plants are beautiful, and asked if the volunteers would maintain them. Steve Gross commented that it has been difficult to sustain interest in the past as group membership changed, perhaps this service project could evolve into a longer term partnership. Vice-Chair Bill Dikis echoed the preference for some annuals in the landscape. Steve Gross said there are not a lot of annuals on complex, they come with beautiful colors but are also costly to maintain. Vice-Chair Bill Dikis said perhaps just small spots for annuals or perennial flowers and the rest to be shrubs/grasses. Steve Gross said his strategy going forward is to separate plants every 3 – 4 years and switch plantings among beds to get new look at no/low cost. Director Carroll suggests DAS take a look at perennials that have constant flowers or variation in color over the years.

Cherry Blossom Trees:

Steve Gross reported that the 20 Sakura cherry trees are expected to be delivered and partially planted next week, with planting to be finished by the Girl Scouts on Arbor Day.

Staff Reports/Project Updates

Legislative Update:

Caleb Hunter said the main focus will be on Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund. There are already obligations of \$55 million in annual payments for debt services and a \$66 million transfer to general fund, which makes up ½ of total revenues available. For vertical infrastructure, the House bill appropriated \$20 million for FY13, but the Governor recommended \$0 and the Senate appropriated \$0. Waiting on Conference committee for final funding – one amendment included renaming the Department of Public Safety building for the first officer killed in the line of duty.

Building Evaluations:

Director Carroll reported that three private entities looked at possible plans for the Wallace Building and the Iowa Building and all came back with the same recommendation: completely renovate Wallace and tear down the Iowa Building (operational cost and maintenance upgrades make continued use cost prohibitive). DAS is planning to ask for an appropriation in FY14 for the complete renovation of Wallace (including gutting the interior and replacing the exterior skin). All occupants would need to be moved out for 4 – 5 years until the renovation was complete. Once the building renovation is finished, DAS is considering a citizen service center at first floor of the Wallace building for all agencies. Director Carroll said it will be easier for citizens to access services and makes a much more secure environment. Elizabeth Isaacson asked if there's ample parking at the Wallace building. Director Carroll said that would be part of design. Elizabeth Isaacson asked what renovation/demolishing would cost. Director Carroll estimated \$30 – 40 million for Wallace renovation and \$2 million to tear down the Iowa Building. Chair Cathy Brown referred oversight of the Wallace Renovation to the Master Plan Committee.

Rowhouse:

DAS is still negotiating the written agreement, but there is a verbal agreement for the East rowhouse to be moved to a site in East Village and rest of building demolished by end of calendar year 2012. Carl Voss said the word on the street is the rowhouse would be moving to Grand between East 4th and 5th and suggested that DAS might want to communicate proactively.

Grimes Building Exterior Lighting:

Steve Gross – Grimes pedestrian lighting has deteriorated and needs to be replaced. DAS has engaged an engineer to develop specifications based on the master plan guidance. The master plan recommends light fixtures have banner arms, but no existing light fixtures currently have banner arms. Steve Gross asked the Commission's opinion on banners and banner arms. After discussion, the Commission decided against having banners on the Complex, partially in order to avoid the perception of the State sponsoring various events. Steve Gross also mentioned that the master plan calls for different light

color for pedestrian versus road/parking lot lighting and asked the Commission's opinion. The Commission discussed the issue and recommended the lighting color be uniform, with sensitivity to historical materials.

MOTION: Carl Voss made a motion to avoid banners and banner arms on light fixtures, to choose a unifying light fixture (but allow some variation, as submitted) and to adopt a uniform color with sensitivity to historical materials. Elizabeth Isaacson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Historical Building:

Exterior repairs are on hold while the building programming and conceptualization is decided. Will move forward with exterior repairs once we know where the visitor center will go.

Capitol Interior/Exterior:

With the remaining funding, the priorities are to finish lightning protection and the stone work on the west steps. Once this work is complete, the focus will shift to maintenance rather than reconstruction.

Capitol Events

See list attached. Nancy Williams will have an update on "Music under the Stars" during the next meeting.

Other Business

Overview of next meeting

Next meeting will be July 19, 2012 from 1 – 4 pm in the Grimes Building – room B100.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:25pm.